

Introduced by Senators Murray and Vincent

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bass, Dymally, Jerome Horton, and
Ridley-Thomas)

December 22, 2004

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 3— Relative to Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 3, as introduced, Murray and. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day.

This measure would honor the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and
commemorate the observance of his birthday, January 17, 2005, as Dr.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Renowned civil rights leader Martin Luther King,
2 Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1929; and
3 WHEREAS, In 1948, Martin Luther King, Jr. received his
4 bachelor of arts degree in sociology from Morehouse College, in
5 1951, he received his bachelor of divinity degree from Crozer
6 Theological Seminary, as valedictorian and student body
7 president, and in 1955, he was awarded a doctorate in systematic
8 theology from Boston University; and
9 WHEREAS, Dr. King married Coretta Scott on June 18, 1953;
10 and
11 WHEREAS, Dr. King was ordained pastor of Dexter Avenue
12 Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954; and
13 WHEREAS, Five days after Rosa Parks' arrest for refusing to
14 comply with segregation on buses in Montgomery, on December
15 5, 1955, Dr. King was elected president of the Montgomery

1 Improvement Association and the Montgomery Bus Boycott
2 began; and
3 WHEREAS, During the boycott, Dr. King gained national
4 prominence as an exceptional leader with extraordinary oratorical
5 skills and personal courage; and
6 WHEREAS, On December 20, 1956, the United States
7 Supreme Court declared Alabama’s segregation laws
8 unconstitutional and Montgomery buses were desegregated; and
9 WHEREAS, In 1957, Dr. King and other southern
10 African-American ministers founded the Southern Christian
11 Leadership Conference, and elected Dr. King as their president;
12 and
13 WHEREAS, Dr. King led the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for
14 Freedom in Washington, DC, and subsequently published his
15 first book, “Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story”;
16 and
17 WHEREAS, In 1959, Dr. King toured India, where he learned
18 more about Gandhian strategies of nonviolence and developed
19 his own theories about achieving social change through
20 nonviolent resistance; and
21 WHEREAS, During mass demonstrations in 1963 organized
22 by Dr. King and his staff in Birmingham, Alabama, images of
23 brutality inflicted on African-American demonstrators by police
24 using police dogs and firehoses shocked the world; and
25 WHEREAS, Dr. King delivered his famous “I Have a Dream”
26 speech on August 28, 1963, at the “March on Washington for
27 Jobs and Freedom”; and
28 WHEREAS, Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo,
29 Norway in 1964, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted as
30 a direct result of his efforts; and
31 WHEREAS, In 1965, Dr. King led the march from Selma,
32 Alabama to Montgomery, and President Lyndon B. Johnson
33 signed the first Voting Rights Act; and
34 WHEREAS, On April 4, 1968, while in Memphis, Tennessee
35 assisting striking sanitation workers, Dr. King was assassinated;
36 and
37 WHEREAS, United States Representative John Conyers
38 introduced legislation in Congress four days later proposing Dr.
39 King’s birthday as a holiday; and

1 WHEREAS, On April 10, 1970, California became the first
2 state to pass legislation making Dr. King's birthday a school
3 holiday; and

4 WHEREAS, Despite resistance to the creation of a new
5 national holiday, the diligence and perseverance of United States
6 Representative John Conyers and numerous others in pursuing
7 this goal culminated when on November 2, 1983, President
8 Ronald Reagan signed legislation making Dr. King's birthday a
9 national holiday; and

10 WHEREAS, January 20, 1986, marked the first observance of
11 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and

12 WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. devoted his
13 life to fight segregation and injustice by nonviolent means, and is
14 an outstanding example of courageous leadership in the face of
15 unrelenting violence and harassment by individuals and
16 government institutions; and

17 WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a source
18 of inspiration for all Americans; now, therefore, be it

19 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
20 *thereof concurring,* That the California Legislature honors the
21 late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and commemorates the
22 observance of his birthday, January 17, 2005, as Dr. Martin
23 Luther King, Jr. Day.